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**FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

**LS 7090**

**BILL NUMBER:** HB 1497

**NOTE PREPARED:** Dec 31, 2008

**BILL AMENDED:**

**SUBJECT:** Vote Centers.

**FIRST AUTHOR:** Rep. Richardson

**FIRST SPONSOR:**

**BILL STATUS:** As Introduced

**FUNDS AFFECTED:** X **GENERAL**  
**DEDICATED**  
**FEDERAL**

**IMPACT:** State & Local

**Summary of Legislation:** *Vote Centers-* The bill establishes the use of vote centers as an option for all counties. The bill requires the county election board (CEB) to adopt an order designating a county a vote center county (VCC), adopt a plan to administer the vote centers, and file the order and the plan with the Election Division (ED). The bill requires the CEB to accept and consider public comment before adopting an order designating the county as a VCC. The bill provides that designation of a county as a VCC remains in effect until the CEB rescinds the order designating the county as a VCC and files a copy of the rescission with the ED. The bill redesignates automatically as a VCC a county previously designated a pilot VCC.

*Vote Center Expiration Date Repeal-* The bill repeals the expiration date of the vote center program and provisions that: (1) require the Secretary of State's (SOS) approval of the vote center designation; and (2) allow the SOS to revoke the vote center designation.

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2009.

**Explanation of State Expenditures:** *Vote Centers-* The SOS and the ED would have additional administrative duties to designate either pilot or permanent vote centers. Both the SOS and ED would be able to carry out the provisions of the bill within their existing level of resources.

**Background-** The SOS reverted \$155,800 and the ED reverted \$23,000 to the General Fund at the end of FY 2008.

**Explanation of State Revenues:**

**Explanation of Local Expenditures:** *Vote Centers-* The establishment of vote centers could reduce the expenditures needed to conduct an election, including payment of fewer poll workers and printing of poll books. However, start-up expenses such as the establishment of an electronic poll book database could offset some of the potential savings. The impact on local expenditures would depend on the adoption of ordinances by county election boards (under unanimous approval) and resolutions of approval by both the county executive and county fiscal body.

**Background-** Reduction of local expenditures would depend largely on requiring one vote center per 10,000 active voters (in counties with 25,000 or more active voters). The following table depicts the number of precincts vs. the potential number of vote centers statewide (if all counties established vote centers at a one-to-10,000 ratio).

| Active Voters (as of 11/25/2008)   | Minimum Vote Centers (one per 10,000 voters) | Inactive Voters (as of 4/30/2008) | Number of Active Precincts (as of 5/6/2008) | 2008 Primary* Election Registered Voters | 2008 Primary* Election Actual Voters Voting |
|--|--|-----------------------------------|---|--|---|
| 4,335,069  | 434  | 406,144                           | 5,346                                       | 4,318,663                                | 1,725,830                                   |
| *2008 general election statistics not yet available from Secretary of State. |  |                                   |   |  |   |

Assuming the number of precincts coincides with the number of polling places would overstate the impact. (Some precincts are housed together in the same polling place and rely on the same voting equipment.) There would be an overall reduction in the number of polling places if every county maintained one vote center per at least 811 active voters. Each precinct is required to maintain a separate precinct election board. Assuming a ratio of one center per 10,000 voters was generally followed, hundreds of precinct election boards would be eliminated by vote centers. Any actual savings would vary by county because many paid precinct election board positions go vacant due to shortage of poll workers or already have been eliminated by various county election boards as unnecessary.

**Explanation of Local Revenues:**

**State Agencies Affected:** Secretary of State, Election Division.

**Local Agencies Affected:** County election boards, school corporations, legislative bodies of second class cities.

**Information Sources:** U.S. Bureau of Census, Department of Education, [www.in.gov/sos/elections/](http://www.in.gov/sos/elections/); Indiana State Budget Agency: *General and Rainy Day Fund Summaries*, June 30, 2008.

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